Vol. VI. Numb. 79

THE OBSERVATOR.

The Country-man's *Opinion, that our Merchants ſhould ſend the* Obſervator *an Account of any Loſſes by Sea, that he may have miſs'd. A farther Account of our Loſſes that way. The* Obſervator *oblig'd to interrupt* Roger's *Account, and to look into the Poſture of Affairs Abroad, which look ill in* Germany : *Therefore* Roger *is for a Conference with the Elector of* Hannover. *Reflections on the ill Poſture of Affairs in* Spain.

From Saturday, November 29. to Wednesday, December 3. 1707.

Obſ. I Hear, *Roger*, that notwithſtanding all your Diligence, you have miſs'd ſeveral Accounts of our Loſſes by Sea this Year; therefore pray be more particular in your Enquiries, when you go next to Town.

Country-m. Maſter, I am as diligent as poſſible, but will enquire farther. In the mean Time, ſince our Merchants and Traders have ſuffer'd ſo much, I think 'tis their Intereſt to ſend you what Accounts they find omitted; they know how to direct to your Printer and Publiſher, by the Advertiſement: But if they will be wanting to themſelves, who can help it? They ſee, that you and I are willing to do the Publick what Service we can, in giving an Account of thoſe Things, in order to a Redreſs, now that our Parliament (God bleſs 'em) is upon the Enquiry. We have no other End in it, than to ſerve our Country, without Prejudice to Party or Perſon; for 'tis the bettering of our Management, and enquiring into Things; and not ſeeking Revenge, or purſuing perſonal or party Quarrels, that muſt do the Nation's Buſineſs. Tho' at the ſame Time, thoſe who are guilty, ought not to go unpuniſh'd, no more than the Innocent ſhould ſuffer in their Reputation.

Obſ. I have hitherto forborn Names, tho' they were ſent me, that no Body ſhould have Ground to charge me with perſonal Reflections; but 'tis a Duty we owe our Country, to take Notice of Abuſes or Miſmanagements. Let thoſe who pretend to juſtify themſelves by their Orders, produce them, in God's Name, for their own Vindication, and doing Juſtice to their Country, that it may be known where the Fault lies. But go on with your Account of our Loſſes and Diſgraces at Sea ſince *January* laſt.

Country-m. Oct. 28. we had Advice from *Portſmouth*, of Sir *Geo. Bing*'s Arrival with the melancholy News, That Sir *Cloudſly Shovel*, in the *Aſſociation*, a ſecond Rate, of 680 Men, and 96 Guns, was caſt away on the Rocks call'd, *The Biſhop and his Clerks*, off of *Scilly*; that the *St. George* did alſo beat againſt the ſame Rocks; that the *Eagle*, a third Rate, of 400 Men, and 70 Guns; the *Rumney*, a fourth Rate, of 280 Men, and 54 Guns; and the *Firebrand* Fireſhip, of 45 Men, and 8 Guns, were alſo loſt.

Obſ. Theſe were fatal Tydings indeed, *Roger*, and affected me ſo much the more, that there ſeem'd to be a judicial Infatuation in it. 'Twas ſtrange, that Sir *Cloudſly*, who was bred to the Sea from his Infancy, ſhould be guilty of ſuch a Neglect and Miſtake, upon our own Coaſt too! But, after all, tho' the Judgment of God was viſible in it, we can't ſay, that the Conduct of Man was blameleſs; for as we obſerv'd before, had we been poſſeſs'd of a Port in the *Mediterranean*, to Winter in, there had been no Need for Sir *Cloudſly*'s Return; or had the former Orders of our Admiralty been obſerv'd, which, I am inform'd, was, *That no great Men of War ſhould be out after the* 10*th of* October, the Damage might have been prevented: But this is the fruit of falling into new Meaſures and Management, without duly examining into the Reaſons of the old, before the new be comply'd with.

Country-m. I go on with my Account, Maſter. The next Poſt (as if Providence had deſign'd to mortify us with a Glut of ill News from Sea) we had Advice, That our ſix *Eaſt India* Ships, richly laden, were forc'd to put into *Crookhaven* in *Ireland*, and to raiſe Batteries there, to defend themſelves the beſt they could, for Fear of the *French*; one of whoſe Privateers had been three Days in view of that Haven. Now, for any thing I know, Monſieur *Fourbin* and *Guy Trouin* had Intelligence alſo of theſe *Eaſt India* Ships, and that 'twas meer Providence which ſav'd 'em; for the ſame Letters brought Advice, That two *Virginia* Ships, belonging to *Leverpool*, were taken at the Mouths of the Harbours of *Cork* and *Youghal*. And, that the *Scots* might not be without a Benefit-Ticket too, we had that ſame Day Advice from *Edinburgh*, That the *Scots* Ships bound to the *Baltick* with their Herrings, fell in with ſome *French* Privateers at the Mouth of the *Soundt*, who took ſome of them, and burnt one. This I obſerve, Maſter, on Account of the Union.

Obſ. You do well, *Roger*; for the chief Inducement the *Scots* had to agree to the Union, was, their Hopes of enlarging their Trade, and being ſupported in it; but the Trouble they had about the Goods they imported ſince the Union, which the Commons have obtain'd her Majeſty's Promiſe to redreſs, and finding the Loſs of their Ships by Privateers too, are Circumſtances diſcouraging enough: But ſince the Parliament has remov'd the Difficulty about their Goods, and has alſo Trade and Convoys under Conſideration, we have Reaſon to hope, that Things will be better for Time to come. But, *Roger*, there's a Neceſſity for me to break in a little upon your *Account of our Loſſes and Diſgraces by Sea ſince* January *laſt*, becauſe the Clouds ſeem to gather ſo thick upon us from beyond Sea, as to darken our Hemiſphere, ſo that we muſt look a little that way.

Country-m. With all my Heart, Maſter: Madam *Neceſſity*'s Orders ought always to be obey'd; and I hear her calling aloud to us, from t'other ſide of our Herring-Pond, as well as on this ſide.

Obſ. That's too true, *Roger*; for I perceive the *Dutch* complain to the Dyet of *Ratisbone*, "That "they do more than they are oblig'd to by Treaty, "whereas the Empire comes ſhort of theirs, and "have never yet brought to the Field 120000 Men, "according to the Reſolve of the Dyet; and tho' "we and the *Dutch* have added 5000 Men to their "Army on the *Rhine*, the Empire brings out their "Troops in ſuch ſmall Numbers, and that ſo ſlowly too, that tho' the *French* pierc'd into the Heart "of the Empire, the *Germans*, as if they had no "Concern to do otherwiſe, were ſo far from aſſembling Troops enough to redreſs thoſe Diſorders, "that they have ſpent the whole Summer in forming a Reſolve to raiſe 100000 Crowns, which "is not yet done; tho' at the ſame Time the *French* "levy'd ſeveral Millions from the Empire, which "they ought to have given voluntarily for their "own Defence. Upon which, the States tell 'em "truly, That except they take better Meaſures, all

"the

" the Money and Blood they have ſpent during " the War, is loſt, and the Empire will be in a " worſe Condition than before.

Country-m. I am ſorry for it, Maſter. Our Parliament, who have before them an Account of the Subſidies we pay our Allies, are proper Judges what is to be done in this Matter; for 'tis very hard, that we ſhould raiſe Millions of Pounds Sterling with ſo much Readineſs, when the great *German* Empire is ſo backward to raiſe a few hundred thouſand Rixdollars for their own Defence! You know, Maſter, we ſignify'd our Fears of the Elector of *Hannover*'s being baffl'd in his Command of the Imperial Army, for want of Money and other Neceſſaries; and that we talk'd of the ill Conſequences it might have as to the Proteſtant Succeſſion at Home, and the common Alliance Abroad, in Numb. 73. of this Vol.

Obſ. True, *Roger*; and I am the more concern'd at this, becauſe I perceive, by the publick Papers printed in *Holland* by the Authority of the States, that the Elector ſeems to be very diffident of having neceſſary Supplies in Time, and therefore *makes ſome Difficulty to reſume the Command of the Imperial Army next Year, except he have* 200000 *Rixdollars more, and a Reinforcement of* 5000 Saxons, *beſides the* Danes, *who ſerv'd in* Bavaria. This gives me Cauſe to ſuſpect, *Roger*, that the Empire may ſtill come ſhort in fulfilling their Treaties, and that " their " Weakneſs, and the ill Poſture of their Affairs " upon the *Rhine*, may give the *French* an Opportunity to make themſelves ſtronger in all other " Parts next Year, as her Majeſty has been pleas'd to obſerve in her moſt gracious Speech to both Houſes, *it did laſt Year*, and by Conſequence diſappoint her Majeſty's Expectations, and thoſe of her Subjects: " That the ſaid Defect ſeem'd to be " in a promiſing Way of being fully remedy'd a- " gainſt next Campaign, by the Conduct and Au- " thority of the Elector of *Hannover*, whoſe ſeaſon- " able Acceptance of that Command, had ſtreng- " then'd and oblig'd the whole Confederacy.

Country-m. I am afraid of the ſame, Maſter; and therefore, might I be allow'd to give my plain Country Opinion, I ſhould think it neceſſary for us to know of the Elector himſelf, *from whoſe Acceptance of that Command we expected ſo much*, what thoſe new Difficulties are, that have occurr'd ſince, which ſeem to threaten us with a Diſappointment of that Importance? And from whence they ariſe? But whether this were beſt to be done by deſiring that Prince to come hither for a Month or ſix Weeks, to confer with her Majeſty and a Committee of both Houſes, or by ſending a Deputation to his Electoral Highneſs with all convenient Speed, muſt be left to the Determination of our Superiors.

Obſ. You muſt not be too forward with your Propoſals, *Roger*, nor meddle with Things above your Sphere.

Country-m. Pray, Maſter, don't we find in ſacred Records, that a poor Man's Advice has ſav'd a City? And why may it not ſometimes be uſeful to a Kingdom? I am ſure, Maſter, I ſhould be willing to give the Price of the beſt Horſe in my Team towards the Expence of the Elector's Journey; nay, rather than fail, I would pawn *Joan*'s beſt Gown, and my own Holiday-Suit.

Obſ. I don't much b'ame you, *Roger*; ſince you propoſe it modeſtly, I am ſatisfy'd you deſign no Ill by it.

Country-m. Not I, upon my honeſt Word, Maſter; But ſince her Majeſty, who knows beſt, was pleas'd to ſay, *That the Elector's accepting that Command, did ſtrengthen and oblige the whole Confederacy*, I am ſure his being baulk'd in it, will weaken and diſoblige the ſame: And ſince we honeſt *Britains* bear a greater Part of the Charge, than any of them; and that the Elector and we are ſo nearly concern'd in one another, I propos'd it, becauſe I thought we may depend upon his Information, Judgment, and Affection, more than upon any other *German* Prince whatever, ſince, beſides his Title to the Reverſion of our Crown, he is naturaliz'd and become one of us, and therefore can take no Pleaſure, that we ſhould ſpend our Money and Blood to defend a People, who, by the *Dutch* Memorial, ſeem ſcarcely to think it worth their While to defend themſelves.

Obſ. There are other Things beyond Sea, which look cloudy, *Roger*, but I can only name them now; and they are, The Duke of *Savoy* ſeems to be apprehenſive of his not being ſtrong enough on that ſide, and can expect but little Aſſiſtance from the Emperor; that Jeſuitical Councils prevail ſtill to continue the War in *Hungary*, tho' we and the *Dutch*, to whom the Houſe of *Auſtria* is ſo much oblig'd, did all we could to mediate a Peace; but what is worſe, all the Treaſure and Blood we have ſpent, to recover *Spain*, ſeems in danger of being loſt, by the taking of *Lerida* and *Mount Alba*, and the *French* Armies extending their Contributions as far as *Tarracona*, within 50 or 60 Miles of *Barcelona*; the Siege of which Place we ſeem to have too much Reaſon to apprehend, before the Allies can ſend Supplies enough to prevent it, eſpecially conſidering the great Loſſes we have ſuſtain'd this Year by Sea; of which I expect a farther Account from you next Time, *Roger*.

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